



Dr James C Kennedy Jr

October 5, 1935 - March 9, 2026

Dr. James Clarence Kennedy, Jr., of Worthington, Ohio, died on March 9, 2026 in Columbus, Ohio. Jim, aka “Pete,” was a loving (and loved) husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Jim was born in Huntington, West Virginia on October 5, 1935, and is survived by his six children: Michael (Antoinette) Kennedy, Erin Kennedy, Maureen (Frank) Perez, Mary Bronwyn (Carmelo) Trujillo, Kate (Matt) Kennedy, and Timothy (Kaitlyn) Kennedy, along with fourteen grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Jim is preceded in death by two wives: Sheila (Haptonstall) Kennedy and Patricia (Hayes) Kennedy; his parents, James Kennedy, Sr., and Gussie (Jolly) Kennedy; his brother Daniel (Linda) Kennedy; and his sister, Judi (Charles) Gumpel.

Jim took pride in his long career as an old-school, heads-down engineer. Having earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Purdue University, he went on to earn a Master of Science and then Ph.D. in Engineering Mechanics from The Ohio State University. His life’s work included teaching undergrad engineering students at Ohio State, where he was known as a tough taskmaster. He engineered defense systems at North American Aviation and Battelle Memorial Institute, and held national

leadership positions on various engineering, defense, and transportation committees. After an industrious career of six decades, he retired from EMC2.

Jim worked on dozens of research programs for the government, leading high-profile projects such as improving the GAU-8 cannon on the A-10 aircraft, the F-16 battery systems, and state-of-the-art methods for modeling and simulating pavement systems and railroad track structures. As a manager in Battelle's National Defense Division, Jim oversaw a group of technical specialists in equipment development and engineering mechanics. He was dedicated to making sure his staff had whatever was needed to get the job done, and was highly respected by his staff and peers.

Jim loved sports and was athletic his entire life and enjoyed basketball, running, and tennis. He described himself as "small but slow," and was extremely competitive. In his later years, he loved playing tennis with Pat on Fripp Island, South Carolina. Jim was also an enthusiastic lover and reader of history. Jim was known to tear through books on World War II history so fast that his family struggled to keep more books coming to him, even at the age of 90.

Throughout his productive and happy life he experienced the joys of his family and friends with exuberance and suffered losses with dignity. He'll be remembered by his family as stubborn, funny, unfiltered, sentimental, brilliant, opinionated, and direct. He was a man of uncompromising integrity.

Visitation for Jim will be held at Rutherford-Corbin Funeral Home, 515 N. High St., Worthington, Ohio 43085 on Wednesday March 11th from 4pm to 6pm

followed by a traditional Catholic rosary recitation. A funeral service will be held at Saint Michael Catholic Church, 5750 N. High St., Worthington, Ohio on Thursday March 12th at 10:30am. Internment on Friday, March 20th at 10:30am at Walnut Grove Cemetery, 5561 Milton Ave., Worthington, Ohio.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 11. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford-Corbin Funeral Home
515 High Street
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-4006
info@rutherfordfuneralhome.com
<https://www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com/>

Catholic Mass

MAR 12. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Saint Michael the Archangel
N High Street
5750
Worthington, OH 43085

Graveside Service

MAR 20. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Walnut Grove Cemetery
5561 Milton Ave.
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-5033

Tribute Wall



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.



March 16 at 04:12 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

March 16 at 04:12 PM



“ We enjoyed many evenings visiting with Jimmy at the Worthington Old Bag of Nails and shared travel and historical reading as interests with him. We loved seeing pictures of the Fripp Island house and hearing family stories. It was not until we saw the obituary photo did we also realize that Ted and his brother Rick played basketball together with Jimmy 40 years ago! RIP good friend. You will be missed. 🙏
Donna and Ted Freuler

Donna Staten Freuler - March 12 at 09:51 AM



“ Love, Oculus Pathology purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.



Love, Oculus Pathology - March 12 at 09:01 AM

JM

“ James M. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

James M. - March 11 at 06:21 PM

LP

“ I'll always remember Uncle Jim saying “Hi Honey or Hi Sweetie” from the time I was a little girl until the last time he greeted me! I loved his dry sense of humor- he always made me laugh. He will be missed!!

Lauren Phillips - March 11 at 11:23 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.



March 11 at 10:53 AM

YC

“ Your Colleagues at UC, CECH-IT purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.



Your Colleagues at UC, CECH-IT - March 11 at 10:29 AM



“ *Forever Our Angel Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.*



March 10 at 09:21 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

March 10 at 09:21 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.*



March 10 at 09:19 PM



“ *Vicki Torello, Mary and Amy Torello, Jim Torello purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.*



Vicki Torello, Mary and Amy Torello, Jim Torello - March 10 at 07:58 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

March 10 at 07:41 PM



“ Barb Anderson Family purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.



Barb Anderson Family - March 10 at 06:19 PM



“ Patrick Harnett, Mike, Sheila O'Reilly purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

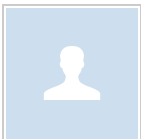


Patrick Harnett, Mike, Sheila O'Reilly - March 10 at 04:50 PM



“ Patrick Harnett, Mike, Sheila O'Reilly planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

Patrick Harnett, Mike, Sheila O'Reilly - March 10 at 04:50 PM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

March 10 at 04:00 PM

BB

“ Jim was a mentor of many engineers including myself. He was an extremely loyal and good friend. I will never forget his many jokes and sayings. We miss you Jim.

Bud Brust - March 10 at 03:16 PM

LH

“ Love Joanne Forster and Edward Hui purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.



Love Joanne Forster and Edward Hui - March 10 at 12:42 PM

LH

“ Love Joanne Forster and Edward Hui planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr James C Kennedy Jr.

Love Joanne Forster and Edward Hui - March 10 at 12:42 PM